

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 TRSE-00 AID-05 /083 W

-----105961 240628Z /10

R 231225Z MAR 78

FM AMCONSUL DURBAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2873

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L DURBAN 0194

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SF

SUBJ: NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS WILL NOT JOIN BLACK ALLIANCE

REF: DURBAN 0176

1. PRESIDENT OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS (NIC), M.J. NAIDOO, INFORMED POST MARCH 22 THAT THE NIC'S EXECUTIVE HAS ALL BUT FORMALLY DECIDED NOT TO JOIN THE SOUTH AFRICAN BLACK ALLIANCE (SABA). HE ACKNOWLEDGED THIS AS A REVERSAL OF THE ORIGINAL NIC LEANING AND ATTRIBUTED THE CHANGE TO FACTORS WHICH EMERGED AS THE EXECUTIV'S "THOUGHTS MATURED" IN THE TIME SINCE THE ALLIANCE WAS FORMED IN JANUARY. ON REFLECTION, THE NIC DECIDED IT COULD NOT PERMIT ITSELF TO BE A PARTY TO AN ALLIANCE WITH GROUPS OPERATING WITHIN THE APARTHEID SYSTEM. FURTHER, NAIDOO SAID, BUTHELEZI'S ATTACKS ON DONALD WOODS AND STEVE BIKO UNDERSCORED THE DIVISION BETWEEN MODERN AND RADICAL GROUPS AND EMPHASIZED NIC'S FEAR THAT IT COULD "NVER BE AT HOME" WITH MODERATE GROUPS SUCH AS INKATHA. HE ADDED THE NIC WAS UPSET BY NEWSPAPER REPORTS, QUOTING ALLIANCE LEADERS, THAT

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OTHER GROUPS HAD TO APPLY TO SABA FOR MEMBERSHIP. NAIDOO SAID HE BELIEVED THE NIC SHOULD HAVE BEEN INVITED TO JOIN AND INTIMATED THAT HAD IT BEEN, IT MIGHT WELL HAVE ACCEPTED.

2. COMMENT: IT SEEMS APPARENT THAT THE LACK OF A SPECIFIC ALLIANCE INVITATION OFFENDED THE NIC LEADERSHIP. THIS, COUPLED WITH THE PERSONAL ANIMOSITY THAT HAS GROWN UP BETWEEN THE

INFLUENTIAL MEER FAMILY AND BUTHELEZI, PROBABLY PROVIDED THE
IMPETUS FOR THE NIC'S DECISION TO DECLINE TO JOIN SABA. NAIDOO
DID SAY NIC WOULD COOPERATE WITH THE SABA IN STAGING A
NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF NON-NATIONALIST POLITICAL GROUPS TO
DISCUSS A NEW DISPENSATION OR A NATIONAL CONVENTION INCLUDING
THE NATIONALIST PARTY TO WRITE A NEW CONSTITUTION. THESE ARE
GOALS WHICH THE NIC ITSELF HAS LONG ADVOCATED AND WHICH NAIDOO
INSISTS SHOULD NOT BE INTERFERED WITH BY POLITICAL DIFFERENCES.
FARBER

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